THE

# HISTORY

OF THE

## Remarkable LIFE

Of the Brave and Renowned

# *CHARLES* XII.

## King of SWEDEN.

Giving an Account of

His many Sieges, and Battles with the Kings of *Denmark* and *Poland*, and the Czar of *Muscovy*.

His Defeat by the Czar at *Pultowa*.

His Flight into *Turkey*, and his Behaviour at *Bender*.

With the Manner of his Death at the Siege of *Frederickshall* in *Norway*.

Printed and Sold in *Bow-Church Yard*, *London*.

'TWas thus great CHARLES his conq'ring trophies bore,
And ſpread his deathleſs fame from ſhore to ſhore,
Made Ruſſia tremble, and the world admire
His martial genius and undaunted fire;
Thro'fields of blood purſu'd his deſtin'd courſe,
Unmov'd by threats, by flatt'ry, or by force.
Nor fail'd his courage, tho' 'monſt Turks confin'd,
He ſtill preſerv'd his bravery of mind.
Mov'd by no paſſion, to no face a ſlave,
His pride was to be honeſt, juſt, and brave.
In vain did beauty charm, or love invite,
War was his only ſtudy and delight:
The faireſt face by him neglected ſtood,
While ardour plung'd him into ſeas of blood.
Still to the laſt he dread and fear defy'd,
And in the dauntleſs ſcene he lov'd he dy'd.

# THE LIFE OF *Charles* XII. King of *Sweden*

THIS Prince was born on the 27th of June, 1682. He was Son of Charles XI. King of Sweden, by Uric Eleanora, Daughter to Frederick III King of Denmark. All the great Qualities of his Anceſtors were united in Charles XII. nor had he any other Fault or Misfortune, but that he carried them beyond all Bounds.

At ſix years of age he had ſome little knowledge in Latin, and tranſlated Quintus Curtius; and he took a fancy to that Book, which the Subject inſpired him with rather than the ſtyle. The perſon who explained this author to him, having asked him what he thought of Alexander, I think, ſays the Prince, that I would be like him; but ſays the other. He lived but 32 Years. Ah, replies he, and is not that enough, when one has conquered Kingdoms? They did not fail to carry theſe anſwers to the King his Father, who, upon hearing them, would cry out, This child will excel me, and even go beyond the great Guſtavus. One Day he was diverting himſelf in the King's apartment with looking upon two plans, the one of a town in Hungary, taken by the Turks from the Emperor, and the other of Riga the capital of Livonia, a province conquered by the Swedes about a century ago. Under the plan of the town in

Hungary were theſe words taken from the book of Job, The Lord gave it to me, the Lord hath taken it from me; bleſſed be the name of the Lord. The young Prince, upon reading this, ſtrait took a pencil, and wrote under the plan of Riga, The Lord hath given it to me, and the Devil ſhall not take it from me. Thus in the moſt indifferent actions of his childhood ſome little traces of his reſolute diſpoſition would often fall from him, which diſcovered what he would one day be.

He ſucceeded to the Crown of Sweden on the 15th of April, 1697, and was left by his Father under the Guardianſhip of his Grandmother till he ſhould be eighteen Years of Age. But one Day in November, the ſame Year that his Father died, when he had been taking a review of ſeveral regiments, and Count Piper, the Counſellor of State, ſtood by him, the King appeared quite loſt in a depth of thought. May I take the Liberty, ſays Piper to him, of asking your Majeſty upon what it is that your thoughts are ſo ſeriouſly employed? I am thinking, anſwers the King, that I am capable of commanding thoſe brave fellows yonder, and don't care that either they or I ſhould receive Orders from a Woman. The Queen was ſoon after depriv'd of the Regency, and Charles took upon him the Goverment, and was crowned on the 24th of December following.

Three powerful Princes, taking the advantage of his youth, conſpir'd his ruin almoſt at the ſame inſtant. The firſt was Frederick IV. King of Denmark, his Couſin; the ſecond Auguſtus, Elector of Saxony, and King of Poland; Peter the Great, Czar of Muſcovy, was the third and the moſt dangerous.

The confuſed whiſpers of their preparations alarmed Charles's council, and they deliberated upon them in his preſence; and as ſome of them were propoſing to divert the ſtorm by negotiations, Charles riſing from his ſeat with an air of gravity and reſolution, Gentlemen, ſays he, I am reſolved never to enter upon an unjuſt war, nor put an end to a juſt one, but by the deſtruction of my enemies. My reſolution is fixed, I will attack the firſt

who ſhall declare againſt me, and when I have conquered him, I may hope to ſtrike a terror into the reſt. Theſe words aſtoniſhed all the old counſellors. they looked upon one another without daring to reply, and at laſt, aſhamed to hope leſs than their King, they received his orders for the war with admiration.

He ſet out for his firſt campaign on the 8th of May, N. S. 1710, and never returned to Stockholm afterwards. The King of Denmark had at that time attacked the Dutchy of Holſtein, the Prince of which country was Charles's brother-in law. The Saxon troops of the King of Poland, thoſe of Brandenbourg, Woltenouttle, and Heſſe-Caſſel, joined the Danes; and 8000 Swedes, the troops of Hanover and Zell, and three Dutch regiments, marched to aſſiſt the Duke of Holſtein; two ſquadrons from England and Holland alſo appeared in the Baltick at that time. King Charles ſailed from Carelſcroon with a fleet of 43 veſſels, that which carried him, named the King Charles, was a ſhip of 120 Guns. Count Piper, his firſt Miniſter, General Renchild, and the Count de Guiſcard, Ambaſſador of France in Sweden, embarked with him. He joined the ſquadrons of the allies. The Daniſh fleet declined the engagement, and gave the three united fleets the opportunity of drawing ſo near Copenhagen, as to throw ſome bombs into the Town.

The King then, as in a ſudden tranſport, taking Count Piper and General Renchild by the hands, And what, ſays he, if we ſhould lay hold of the opportunity of making a deſcent, and beſiege Copenhagen by land, whilſt it is blocked up by ſea! Renchild anſwered, Sir, the great Guſtavus, after 15 years experience, would not have made any other propoſition. Orders were immediately given for 5000 men to embark, who lay upon the coaſt of Sweden, and were joined to the troops they had on board. The King quitted his great veſſel, and entered into a lighter frigate; and then they diſpatched 300 grenadiers in ſmall ſhallops towards the ſhore. Among theſe ſhallops were ſmall flat-bottomed boats, which carried the Faſcines, the Chevaux de Frize, and the inſtruments of

the pioneers, 500 ſelect men followed after in other ſhallops. Then came the King's men of war, with two Engliſh frigates and two Dutch, which were to favour the deſcent with their cannon.

Upon the unexpected movement of the veſſels, which threatned a deſcent, the inhabitants in a conſternation at the inactivity of their own fleet, and the motion of the Swediſh ſhips, looked round with terror to ſee in what place the ſtorm would fall. The fleet of Charles ſtopp'd over againſt Humblebeck, within ſeven miles of Copenhagen. The foot were poſted behind thick entrenchments, and what artillery they could get thither was directed againſt the Swedes.

The King then quitted his frigate, to throw himſelf into the firſt ſhallop, at the head of his guards. The Ambaſſador of France was conſtantly at his ſide; Sir, ſays the King to him in Latin, (for he would never ſpeak French) you have no difference with the Danes, you ſhall go no farther if you pleaſe. Sir, anſwered Count de Guiſcard in French, the King my maſter has ordered me to attend your majeſty; I flatter myſelf you will not this day drive me from your court, which never before appeared ſo ſplendid. As he ſpoke theſe words, he gave his hand to the King, who leapt into the ſhallop, whither Count Piper and the Ambaſſador followed him. They advanced under cover of the cannon of the veſſels, which favoured the deſcent. The ſmall boats were but about a hundred yards off the ſhore; Charles, impatient to land, threw himſelf from the ſhallop into the ſea, with his ſword in his hand, and the water above his middle. His Miniſters, the Ambaſſador of France, the officers and ſoldiers immediately followed his example, and marched to ſhore, amidſt a ſhower of muſket ſhot, which the Danes diſcharged. The King, who had never in his life before heard a diſcharge of muskets loaden with ball, asked major Stuart, who ſtood next him, What whiſtling that was which he had in his ears? 'Tis the noiſe of the muſket ball which they fire upon you, ſays the major. That's right, ſays the King, hence-

forward it ſhall be my muſick. And that moment the major, who explained the noiſe to him, received a ſhot in his ſhoulder; and a lieutenant on the other ſide of him fell dead at his feet.

The Daniſh horſe and foot took to their heels after a faint reſiſtance. As ſoon as the King was maſter of their entrenchments, he fell upon his knees to thank God for the firſt ſucceſs of his arms. He immediately cauſed redoubts to be raiſed towards the town, and himſelf marked out the encampment. At the ſame time he ſent back his veſſels to Schonen, a part of Sweden not far from Copenhagen, for freſh recruits of 9000 men. Every thing conſpired to aſſiſt the vivacity of Charles. The 9000 men were upon the ſhore ready to embark, and the next morning a favourable wind brought them to him.

All this paſſed within ſight of the Daniſh fleet, who durſt not venture to interpoſe. Copenhagen in a fright ſent deputies immediately to the King to entreat him not to bombard the town. He received them on horſeback at the head of his regiment of guards, and the deputies fell upon their knees before him. He demanded of the town 400,000 rixdollars, with orders to ſupply his camp with all ſorts of proviſions, which he promiſed they ſhould be honeſtly paid for. They brought him the proviſions, becauſe they durſt not refuſe them, but were in no expectation that the conquerors would vouchſafe to pay for them; and thoſe who brought them were aſtoniſhed to find that they were paid generouſly for without delay by the meaneſt ſoldiers in the army. There had long reigned in the Swediſh troops a ſtrict diſcipline, which contributed not a little to their conqueſt; and the young King made it ſtill more ſevere. There was not a ſoldier who dared to refuſe payment for whatever he bought, much leſs go a maroding, or even ſtir out of the camp. He would not ſo much as allow his troops after a victory the privilege of ſtripping the dead, till they had his permiſſion, and eaſily brought them to the obſervance of this order. Prayers were conſtantly ſaid in his camp twice a day, at ſeven in the morning, and four in the af-

ternoon; and he never failed to be present at them himself, to give his soldiers an example of piety, as well as valour. His camp, which was far better regulated than Copenhagen, had every thing in abundance; and the country people chose rather to sell their provisions to their enemies the Swedes, than to their own countrymen, who did not pay so well for them. And the citizens were more than once obliged to fetch those provisions from the King of Sweden's camp, which they wanted in their own markets.

The King of Denmark was then in Holstein, whither he seemed to have marched only to raise the siege of Toningen. He saw the Baltick covered with his enemy's ships, a young conqueror already master of Zealand, and ready to take possession of the capital. He published a declaration, that whoever would take up arms against the Swedes, should have their liberty. This declaration was of great weight in a country, where all the peasants, and even many of the townsmen were slaves. But Charles XII. was in no fear of an army of slaves. He let the King of Denmark know, that he made war for no other reason but to oblige him to make peace; and that he must either resolve to do justice to the Duke of Holstein, or see Copenhagen destroyed, and his kingdom put to fire and sword. The Dane was too fortunate to have to do with a conqueror, who valued himself upon his justice. A congress was appointed to meet in the town of Travendal, on the frontiers of Holstein. The King of Sweden would not suffer the artifice of the ministers to protract the negotiations into any length; he would have the treaty finished with as much rapidity as he made his descent into Zealand. And it was effectually concluded on the 5th of August, to the advantage of the Duke of Holstein, who was indemnified for all the expences of the war, and delivered from oppression. The King of Sweden would accept of nothing for himself, being satisfied with having relieved his ally, and humbled his enemy. Thus Charles XII at eighteen years of age began and ended this war in less than six weeks.

At the ſame time the King of Poland laid ſiege in perſon to Riga, the capital town of Livonia; and the Czar was upon his march in the Eaſt at the head of 100,000 men. Riga was defended by the old Count d' Alberg, a Swediſh General, 80 years of Age, who had ſerved 60 campaigns; and the ſiege was carried on, under the King of Poland, by Count Flemming, a great man both in the field and at the council-board, and Mr. Patkul. But as Riga was full of merchant mens goods belonging to the Dutch, the ſiege was raiſed on the Repreſentations of the States-General.

No more then remained for Charles XII. to do for finiſhing his firſt campaign than to march againſt his rival in glory, the Czar Peter Alexiowitz, who had ravaged Ingria with 100,000 men, and appeared before Narva at the head of this great army on the firſt of October, in a ſeaſon more ſevere in that climate than the month of January is at Paris. The Czar was no ſooner arrived before the place, than he marked out his camp, fortified it on all ſides, raiſed redoubts at certain diſtances, and opened the trench himſelf. He gave the command of his army to the Duke de Croy, a German, and an able General; and for himſelf, had only the rank of a private lieutenant in his own troops.

On the 13th of November the Czar had information that the King of Sweden having croſſed the ſea with two hundred tranſports, was upon his march to relieve Narva. The Swedes were no more than twenty thouſand, but the Czar had no advantage except ſuperiority of number. Far therefore from deſpiſing his enemy, he employed all the art he had to cruſh him, and not content with 100,000 men, he was getting ready another army to oppoſe him, and check his progreſs. He had already given orders for near 40,000 recruits, who were coming up from Pleſcow with great expedition. He went in perſon to haſten their march, that he might hem in the King between the two armies. Nor was this all; a detachment of 30,000 men from the camp before Narva were poſted at a league's diſtance from the town, directly

in the King of Sweden's road: 20,000 Streletſes were placed farther off upon the ſame, and 5000 others made up an advanced guard; and he muſt neceſſarily force his way through the body of all theſe troops before he could reach the camp, which was fortified with a rampart and double Foſſe. The King of Sweden had landed at Pernaw in the gulph of Riga, with about 16,000 foot, and a few more than 4000 horſe.

From Pernaw he made a flying march as far as Revel, following by all his horſe, and only 4,000 of his foot. But he always marched before, without waiting for the reſt of his troops; and ſoon found himſelf, with his 8000 men only, before the firſt poſts of the enemy. He without heſitation attacked them one after another, without giving them time to learn with how ſmall a number they had to engage. The Muſcovites ſeeing the Swedes come upon them, made no doubt but they had a whole army to encounter; and the advanced guard of 5000 men immediately fled upon their approach. The 20,000 beyond them, terrified with the flight of their countrymen, made no reſiſtance; and carried their conſternation and confuſion among the 30,000, who were poſted within a league of the camp; and the panick ſeizing upon them too, they retired to the main body of the army without ſtriking a blow. Theſe three poſts were carried in two days and an half; and what upon other occaſions would have been reckoned three victories did not retard the King's march the ſpace of one hour. He appeared then at laſt with his 8000 men, wearied with the fatigues of ſo long a march, before a camp of 150 pieces of braſs cannon in their front: And he ſcarce allow'd them any time for reſt, before he gave his orders for the attack without delay.

The ſignal was two fuſees, and the word in German, With the aid of God. A general Officer having repreſented to him the great hazard of the attempt, What, ſays he, do you make any queſtion whether I with my 8000 brave Swedes ſhall not rout 100,000 Muſcovites? But upon recollection, fearing there was too much often-

tation in what he ſaid, he ran after the officer in a moment. And are not you, ſays he, of the ſame opinion? Have not I a double advantage over the enemy; the one, that their horſe can be of no ſervice to them; and the other, that the place being ſtrait, their great number will only incommode them, and thus in reality I ſhall be ſtronger than they? The Officer did not think fit to differ from him, and thus they marched againſt the Muſcovites about noon on the 30th of November, 1700.

As ſoon as the cannon of the Swedes had made a breach in the entrenchments, they advanced with their bayonets at the end of their fuſees, at the ſame time a violent ſtorm of ſnow, which fell at their backs, was driven by the wind full in the face of the enemy. The Muſcovites ſtood their fire for half an hour, without quitting their poſts. The King attack'd the Czar's quarters, which lay on the other ſide of the camp, and was in hopes of a re-encounter, as not knowing that the Emperor was gone in queſt of the 40,000 men, who were daily expected. Upon the firſt diſcharge of the enemies ſhot, the King received a ball in his left ſhoulder, but it grazed only in a ſlight manner upon the fleſh; his activity even hindered him from perceiving that he was wounded. Preſently after his horſe was killed under him. A ſecond had his head carried off by a cannon ball. And as he was nimbly mounting a third, Theſe fellows, ſays he, make me exerciſe, and then he went on to engage and give orders with the ſame preſence of mind as before. Within three hours the entrenchments were carried on all ſides. The King purſued the right of the enemy as far as the river of Narva, with his left wing, if one might properly call by that name about 4000 men, who were in purſuit of near 50,000. The bridge broke under them as they fled, and the river was in a moment covered with the dead. The reſt in deſpair returned to their camp, without knowing whither they went, and finding certain barracks, they took their poſts behind them There they defended themſelves for awhile, as not knowing how to make their eſcape. But at laſt their generals Dolhorouky,

Gallouin, and Fedorowitz ſurrendered themſelves to the King, and laid their arms at his Majeſty's feet. And in the inſtant they were offering them, came up the Duke of Croy, the General of the army, to ſurrender himſelf with 30 Officers.

In the mean time night came on, and the left wing of the Muſcovites ſtill continued fighting. The Swedes had not loſt 1500 men; 18,000 Muſcovites had been killed in their entrenchments; a great number was drowned; many had paſſed the river. The King employed the ſmall remains of the day in ſeizing upon the enemy's artillery. He poſted himſelf to advantage between their camp and the town, and there ſlept ſome hours on the ground, wrapt up in his cloak, expecting to fall at day-break upon the left wing of the enemy, which was not yet entirely routed. But at two o'clock in the morning General Wade, who commanded that wing, ſurrender'd to the conqueror with about 30,000 Muſcovites, who marched, Soldiers and officers, acroſs leſs than 7000 Swedes, the ſoldiers, as they paſſed before him, throwing down their fuſees and ſwords upon the ground, and the officers preſented him with their enſigns and colours. He cauſed them all to croſs the river, without retaining a priſoner, and entered victorious into Narva, attended by the Muſcovites general officers, to whom he reſtored their ſwords, and ſent the Duke of Croy 1000 ducats, and every Muſcovite officer 500. A relation of this victory was ſent to Stockholm, but the King cut off with his own Hand whatever was reported too much to his own advantage, or to the detriment of the Czar.

The King of Poland now expecting that Charles, already victorious, would next vent his Fury on him, entered into a league more ſtrict than ever with the Czar, and theſe two Princes had an interview at Birſen in Lithuania, the better to contrive their meaſures. The King of Sweden, by the advice of Count Piper, oppoſed to their meaſures a little court policy, which he had hitherto diſregarded. There was in the Swediſh troops

a young Scotch Gentleman, who ſpoke the German tongue extremely well, who was choſe to be a ſpy upon the conferences of the two Kings. He applied himſelf to the Colonel of the regiment of Saxon horſe who were to ſerve as guards to the Czar during the interview. He paſſed for a gentleman of Brandenbourg, and his addreſs and a proper diſtribution of money eaſily procured him a lieutenancy in the regiment. When he came to Birſen, he artfully inſinuated himſelf into the familiarity of the ſecretaries of the miniſters, and was made a party in all their pleaſures; and drew from them all the ſecrets of their maſters, and gave immediate notice of them to Charles XII.

The King of Poland not being able to engage the Republick in his quarrel, determined to ask peace of the King of Sweden. As the affair was delicate, he entruſted it wholly to the Counteſs of Koningſmarck, a Swediſh lady, famous in the World for her wit and beauty. She came to the Swediſh camp in Lithuania, and applied herſelf to Count Piper, who too inadvertently promiſed her an audience of his maſter; but all her wit and charms were loſt upon ſuch a man as the King of Sweden, and he conſtantly refuſed to ſee her. But as he frequently rode out to take the air, ſhe reſolved to ſpeak to him upon the road. And accordingly meeting him one day in a narrow road, ſhe alighted out of her coach as ſoon as ſhe ſaw him. The King made her a low bow, without ſpeaking one word to her, turned the bridle of his horſe, and rode back in an inſtant. So that the Counteſs gained no other advantage from her journey, but the ſatisfaction of believing that the King of Sweden feared no body but her.

King Auguſtus not being able by any means to obtain peace, fled from Warſaw, where the King of Sweden arrived on the 5th of May, 1702. The Gates were opened to him on the firſt ſummons. He ſent away the Poliſh garriſon, diſmiſſed the city guard, every where poſted guards of his own, ordered the inhabitants to bring in their arms, and demanded a contribution of 100,000

ſranes. King Auguſtus was then getting together his forces at Cracow; and the Cardinal Primate, who was under-hand endeavouring to dethrone that King, waited on the King of Sweden at Praag, not far from Warſaw. He found the conqueror clad in a coat of coarſe blue cloth, with braſs buttons gilt, jack-boots, and buff skin gloves, that reached up to his elbows, in a room without hangings, in company with the Duke of Holſtein his brother-in-law, Count Piper, and ſeveral officers. The King told the Cardinal, he would never give peace to the Poles till they had elected another King; which the Cardinal immediately ſignified to all the Palatinates of the Kingdom, and laid before them the neceſſity of complying with the conqueror.

Upon this news, the King of Poland ſeeing that he muſt either loſe his crown or preſerve it by arms, marched with his forces to ſeek in perſon the King of Sweden, who was marching againſt him towards Cracow, near which Place the two Kings met on the 19th of July, 1702, when 20,000 Saxons were beat by 12,000 Swedes, and King Auguſtus retired in all haſte with the ſcatter'd remains of his troops to Thorn, which ſoon ſurrender'd to the Swedes.

On the 14th of February, 1704, King Auguſtus was pronounced incapable of wearing the crown of Poland, and the throne declared vacant; and on the 12th of July, the Palatine Staniſlaus Lecſinsky was choſen King of Poland, and Auguſtus was forced to abandon that kingdom to his enemies, and withdrew into Saxony, and Staniſlaus was crowned on the 4th of October, 1705, in the preſence of the King of Sweden.

In the mean while 100,000 Muſcovites, on one ſide, divided into ſmall bodies, burnt and ravaged the eſtates of the adherents to Staniſlaus; and General Shullembourg, on the other, was advancing with ſome freſh Saxon Troops. But the fortune of the Swedes diſperſe theſe two armies in leſs than two months. Charles XII. and Staniſlaus fell upon the ſeparate bodies of the Muſcovites one after another; but ſo briskly, that one Muſco

vite General was beaten before he knew of the defeat of his companion. If Charles found a river in his way betwixt him and his enemy, he and his Swedes would ſwim their horſes over it. The baggage of King Auguſtus was taken, in which were 200,000 crowns, and 800,000 ducats belonging to the Muſcovite General were ſeized. Charles, at the head of his horſe, would often march 30 leagues in 24 hours, every ſoldier leading another horſe in his hand to Mount, when his own was weary. The Muſcovites, terrified and reduced to a ſmall number, fled in diſorder beyond the Boriſthenes.

Whilſt Charles was thus driving the Muſcovites, the Saxon General Shullembourg repaſſed the Odet, and gave battle to the Swediſh marſhal Renchild, near Runitz, in a place called Fravenſted, a territory already fatal to the troops of Auguſtus. Renchild had no more than 10,000 men, and Shullembourg had twice as many, among them between 6 and 7000 Muſcovites; who all ſurrender'd without reſiſtance.

On the 22d of September, in the year 1708, the King attacked a body of 10,000 Horſe and 6000 Calmouks near Smolensko. The King fell upon this army with only ſix regiments of horſe, and 4000 foot; broke their ranks upon the firſt onſet at the head of his Oſtrogothick regiment, and forced the enemy to retreat. He advanced upon them through rough and hollow ways, where the Calmouks lay hid; they then appeared again, and threw themſelves between the regiment where the King was fighting and the reſt of the Swediſh army. The Muſcovites and Calmouks in an Inſtant ſurrounded this regiment, and made their way quite up to his Majeſty. The King's horſe was ſlain under him; and as one of his equeries was preſently him another, both the equery and horſe wear ſtruck dead upon the ſpot. Charles fought on foot, encircled by ſome of his officers, who immediately flew to relieve him by ſurrounding him.

Several of them were taken, wounded or ſlain, or carried off to a diſtance from the King by the multitude that fell upon them, ſo that only five men were left about

him. He was quite ſpent with fatigue, having killed above a dozen of the enemy with his own hand, without receiving ſo much as one wound, by that inexpreſſible good fortune, which till then had ever attended him, and upon which he ſtill relied. At laſt Colonel Dardoff forced his way through the Calmouks with a ſingle company of his regiment, and came time enough to diſengage the King. The reſt of the Swedes put the Tartars to the ſword.

The army recovered its ranks, Charles mounted his horſe, and, fatigued as he was, purſued the Muſcovites into the Ukraine, and fought there five battles with them, and towards the latter end of May, 1709, laid ſiege to Pultowa, on the river Vorſlat. He carried on the ſiege with extraordinary warmth, took the advanced works, and gave two aſſaults to the body of the place; and having rode into the river to take a nearer view of ſome of the works, received a ſhot from a carbine, which pierced through his boot, and ſhattered the bone of his heel. There was not the leaſt alteration obſerved in his countenance, by which it could be ſuſpected that he was wounded; he continued calmly to give orders, and remained near ſix hours on horſeback afterwards. One of his domeſticks at laſt perceiving that the ſole of his boot was bloody, made haſte to call the ſurgeons; and the King's pain then began to be ſo ſharp, that they were forced to take him off his horſe, and carry him to his tent. The ſurgeons, when they had examined the wound, were of opinion that the leg muſt be cut off. The army was in the utmoſt conſternation. But one of the ſurgeons named Newman, who was better skilled, and more courageous than the reſt, was poſitive that by making deep inciſions he could ſave the King's leg. — "Fall to work then preſently," ſays the King, "cut boldly, fear nothing." He held the leg himſelf with both his hands, looking upon the inciſions that were made, as though the operation had been performed upon another perſon.

As they were laying on the dreſſing, he gave order

for an aſſault the next morning; but the orders were ſcarce given, before word was brought him, that the Czar appeared with an army of above 70,000 men.

On the 8th of July, 1709, was fought the deciſive battle between the King of Sweden and the Czar of Muſcovy, wherein Charles was entirely defeated, near 9000 Swedes killed, and about 6000 taken Priſoners, and Charles was obliged to make his eſcape with the remainder of his Troops.

Whilſt he was getting off, the Muſcovites ſeized upon his artillery in the camp before Pultowa, his baggage, and the money he had raiſed for carrying on the war, where they found ſix millions in ſpecie, the ſpoils of Poland and Saxony.

There ſtilled remained near 18,000 men, comprehending the Coſaques, with the Swedes and Poles, who fled towards the Boriſthenes under the direction of General Levenhaup. He marched one way with theſe fugitive troops, whilſt the King took another road with ſome of his horſe. The coach in which he rode, broke down in his march, and they ſet him again on horſe back. And to finiſh his misfortune, he wandered all night in a wood; there his courage not being able to ſupply any longer his exhauſted ſpirits, and the pain of his wound becoming more inſupportable by fatigue, and his horſe falling under him thro' exceſſive wearineſs, he reſted himſelf for ſome hours at the foot of a tree, in danger of being ſurprized every moment by the conquerors, who ſought for him on all ſides.

He was at laſt obliged to take Refuge in Turkey; and reſide ſome time at Bender, from whence, Feb. 12th, 1713, he received an Order to remove; with which he refuſed to comply, telling the Janiſaries that brought the Order, that if they did not go about their Buſineſs, he would ſhave their beards for them; which in the Eaſt is reckoned the moſt provoking Affront that can be offered. His Houſe was immediately ſurrounded by 300 Turks, who ſoon ſurrender'd to 20 Swedes. The King mounted his Horſe, rode to his Houſe where [illegible]

Turks had got in at Window. He threw himſelf off his horſe with piſtol and ſword in hand, and his followers did the ſame. The Janiſaries fell upon him on all ſides, and he wounded and killed all who came near him. A Janiſary, whom he had wounded, clapp'd a blunderbuſs to his face, but the arm of a Turk joſtled it off, or the King had been killed. The ball grazed upon his noſe, and took off a piece of his ear, and then broke General Hoorn's arm. The King ſtuck his ſword into the Janiſary's breaſt, and at the ſame time his domeſticks, who were ſhut up in the great hall, opened the door to him. He enter'd with his little troop, and the door was again ſhut and barricaded. Thus was Charles XII ſhut up in this hall with all his attendants, amounting to about 60 men, Officers, Guards, Secretaries, Valet de Chambres, and domeſticks of all kinds. The Janiſaries and Tartars pillaged the reſt of the houſe, and filled the apartments. Come, ſays the King, let us go and drive out theſe barbarians! And putting himſelf at the head of his men, ſoon opened the door facing his bed-chamber, which the Turks were plundering, goes into it, and fires at the plunderers, who inſtantly threw down their arms, and leapt out of the Windows, or fled into the cellars. The King purſued them from chamber to chamber, killed or wounded thoſe who had not made their eſcape, and in a quarter of an hour cleared the houſe of the enemy. The King in the heat of the fight perceived two Janiſaries who had hid themſelves under his bed. He thruſt his ſword through one of them and killed him; but the other asked pardon, crying, Amman. I grant you your life ſays the King upon condition that you go and give the Baſha a faithful account of what you have ſeen. The Turk eaſily promiſed to do as he was bid. Upon which he was allowed to leap out of the Window, as the reſt had done. After that the houſe was ſet on fire, and encompaſſed with another body of Turks, upon which, a centinel named Walberg, ventured in this extremity to cry that there was a neceſſity for ſurrendring. What a ſtrang

more glorious to be burnt than taken priſoner! Another centinel, named Roſen, had the thought to ſay, that the Chancery-houſe, which was but 50 paces off, had a ſtone roof, and was proof againſt fire; that it would do well to ſally out and gain that houſe, and there ſtand upon their defence. A true Swede! cries the King: Then he embraced him, and made him a Colonel upon the ſpot. Come on, my friends, ſays he, take all the powder and ball you can carry, and let us gain the Chancery, ſword in hand.

The Turks, who all this while encompaſſed the houſe, were ſtruck with fear and admiration, to ſee that the Swedes continued in it notwithſtanding it was all in flames. But they were much more ſurprized, when they ſaw them open the doors, and the King and his men fall upon them in a deſperate manner: But being booted according to Cuſtom, Charles threw himſelf down with one of his ſpurs, and immediately 21 Janiſaries fell upon him, diſarmed him, and carried him away to the Baſha's quarters, ſome taking hold of his arms, and others of his legs; and from thence he was carried priſoner to Demirtocea.

After ſome years ſtay in Turkey, Charles returned into Sweden, and in the month of December, 1718, laid ſiege to Frederickſhall in Norway. The cold ſo extreme, that the ſoldiers could hardly break the ground. They might as well have opened trenches in a rock; but the Swedes never thought much of any fatigues in which they ſaw their King take his ſhare ſo readily; and Charles himſelf never ſuffered more than now. His conſtitution eighteen years labour was hardened to that degree, that he would ſleep in the open field in Norway, in the midſt of winter, upon boards or ſtraw, covered only with his cloke, without prejudicing his health. Several of the ſoldiers in their poſts fell down dead with cold, and others who were ready to die durſt not complain when they ſaw their King bear what they ſuffered. A little before this expedition, hearing of a woman in

months upon nothing but water; he, who had ſtudied all his life to bear the worſt extremes that human nature can ſupport, was reſolved to try how long he was able to faſt. He neither eat nor drank for five days, and on the ſixth, in the morning, he rid two leagues, and then alighted at the tent of his brother-in-law the Prince of Heſſe, where he eat very heartily, without feeling the leaſt diſorder, either from his long faſting, or his full eating afterward.

With ſuch a body of iron, and a ſoul of ſo much ſtrength and courage, in every condition, there was not one of all his neighbours who did not fear him.

On the 11th of December he went about nine at night to ſee the trenches; and finding the parallel not advanced to his mind, he was a little diſpleaſed; but Monſ. Megret, a French engineer, who conducted the ſiege, aſſured him, the place would be taken in eight days time. We ſhall ſee, ſays the King, and going on with the engineer to examine the works, he ſtopped at a place where the boyau made an angle with the parellel, and kneeling upon the inner talus, he leaned with his elbows on the parapet, to look upon the men who were carrying on the trenches by ſtarlight.

The King ſtood with half his body ex-

at the angle where he was. Two Frenchmen were all who were then near his perſon, one was Monſieur Siker his Aid-de-camp, a man of great courage and conduct, who came into his ſervice in Turky; and was particularly attached to the Prince of Heſſe; the other was this engineer. The cannon fired upon them chain-ſhot, to which the King ſtood moſt expoſed. Not far behind was Count Swerin, who commanded the trenches. Count Poſſe, Captain of the guards, and one Kulbert an Aid-de-camp received his orders. Siker and Megret ſaw the King fall upon the parapet, fetching a deep ſigh. They ran to him, but he was already dead. A ball of half a pound had ſtruck him on the right temple, and made a hole big enough to turn their fingers in. His head lying over the parapet, the left eye was beat in, and the right was forced quite out of its ſocket. He was dead the moment he received this; but he had the force in that inſtant to put his hand by a natural motion to the guard of his ſword, and lay in that poſture.

Thus fell Charles XII. King of Sweden, at the age of 36 years and a half, having known the extremes of proſperity, and of adverſity, without being ſoftened by the one, or in the leaſt diſturbed for a moment at the other. All his actions, even thoſe of his private life, are almoſt beyond any meaſure of probabilit-

Perhaps he was the only man, to be ſure he was the only King, who ever had lived without weakneſs. He carried all the virtues of a Hero to that exceſs, that they became as dangerous as any of the oppoſite vices. His reſolution grown to obſtinacy occaſioned his misfortunes in Ukrania, and kept him five years in Turky. His liberality degenerating into profuſion ruined Sweden. His courage growing into raſhneſs was the occaſion of his death. His juſtice has been ſometimes cruelty: And in his latter years, the maintaining his prerogative came not far ſhort of tyranny. His great qualities, any one of which had been enough to make another Prince immortal, were a misfortune to his country. He never began a quarrel with any, but he was rather implacable than wiſe in his reſentment. He was the firſt who ever had the ambition to be a conqueror, without wiſhing to increaſe his dominions. His deſire to gain kingdoms was only that he might give them away. The paſſion he had for glory, for war, and for revenge, made him too little of a politician, without which the world never before ſaw any Prince a conqueror. Before a battle he was full of confidence; exceeding modeſt after a victory, and in a defeat undaunted. Sparing no other no more than himſelf, he made a ſmall account of his own or his ſubjects lives or labours. A man extraordinary

rather than a great man, and fitter to be admired than imitated. His life however may be a leſſon to Kings, and teach them, that a peaceful and happy Government is more to be deſired than ſo much glory.

He was tall and nobly ſhaped, he had a fine forehead, large blue eyes full of ſweetneſs, and a handſome noſe: but the lower part of his face was diſagreeable, and often diſhgured by a frequent laugh which hardly opened his lips; he had little beard or hair; he ſpoke little, and it was habitual to him to anſwer only with that laugh. At this table there was always great ſilence. With all that inflexible temper of his, he was timerous and baſhful, and would have been at a loſs in converſation, for having given himſelf ſo wholly up to war, he knew but little of ſociety.

As to religion, though the ſentiments of a Prince ought not to influence thoſe of other men; and the opinion of a King ſo little informed as Charles, can be of no great weight in ſuch matters; yet it is proper that men's curioſity ſhould be ſatisfied in this as well as other particulars concerning him. Charles was a ſerious Lutheran, till the year 1707; he then ſaw the famous Philoſopher Monſ. Leibnitz at Leipſick, who was a great free-thinker, and talked very freely, having inſtilled his notions into more Princes than one. Charles learned from the converſation of this

Philoſopher a good deal of indifference for Lutheraniſm; which he carried afterwards much farther, when he had more time in Turkey, and had ſeen ſo many ſorts of profeſſions.

Of all his old opinions he retained but one, which was abſolute predeſtination, a doctrine that favoured his courage, and juſtified his temerity. The Czar had much the ſame opinions as to religion and fate: But was more free to talk of them, as he did indeed of every thing elſe with his favourites very familiarly; for he had this advantage over Charles, that he had ſtudied Philoſophy, and was a good ſpeaker.

I cannot help taking notice here of a ſlander that is too often ſpread by credulous or ill-meaning people, who will have it, that when Princes die, they were either poiſoned or aſſaſſinated. And the ſtory went in Germany, that Monſieur Siker was the man who killed the King of Sweden. That brave Officer was very uneaſy at the calumny a good while. And one day talking of it, he ſaid theſe very words, I might have killed the King of Sweden, but I had ſuch a veneration for the hero, that tho' I had intended it, I could not offer to do it.

As ſoon as he was dead, the ſiege of Frederickſhall was raiſed, and the Swedes made peace with all their neighbours: and put an end to abſolute power, proceeding to a free election of King Charles's ſiſter for their queen, who renounced all hereditary right to the crown, holding it only by the people's choice. Afterwards ſhe yielded the crown to her huſband, the Landgrave of Heſſe Caſſel, and brought the States to chooſe him, who aſcended the throne upon the ſame conditions.

FINIS.